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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Items 35 and 46 of the
preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
IRAQI AGGRESSION AND THE CONTINUED
OCCUPATION OF KUWAIT IN FLAGRANT
VIOLATION OF THE CHARTER OF THE
UNITED NATIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-sixth year

Letter dated 20 March 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Damascus Declaration concerning coordination and cooperation between the Arab States, issued by the meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic, respectively, held at Damascus on 5 and 6 March 1991.

I would appreciate your circulating the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under items 35 and 46 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dia-Allah EL-FATTAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/46/50.

Annex

Damascus Declaration concerning coordination and cooperation between the Arab States

The Arab States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic, participating in the Damascus meeting on 19 and 20 Sha'ban A.H. 1411 (5 and 6 March A.D. 1991),

Proceeding from the feelings of brotherhood and solidarity which link them and which have been enhanced by a deep-rooted heritage of mutual support, solidarity, joint struggle, a deep sentiment of common hopes and challenges, congruity of goals and unity of destiny,

Promoting their capacities to shoulder their national responsibilities for advancing the Arab nation, serving its causes, safeguarding its security and realizing its joint interests,

Within the framework of strong adherence to the goals and principles enshrined in the charters and the resolutions of the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the United Nations,

Aware of the profound transformations taking place on the international arena, which place before the Arab nation enormous challenges whose confrontation requires the highest degrees of coordination and cooperation between the Arab States,

Reaffirming their position rejecting the aggressive approach and partiality for it, such as was witnessed during the aggression against and occupation of the State of Kuwait by the forces of the Iraqi regime, which was a blatant violation of all established Arab, Islamic and international principles and customs and flouted the concepts and achievements of joint Arab action at a time when the Arab nation needs, more than at any time in the past, to reunite and mobilize its capabilities in order to repel many unprecedented dangers,

Declaring also that they welcome the liberation of the State of Kuwait and the return of legitimacy to it; expressing their deep pain and sorrow at the plight to which the fraternal Kuwaiti people has been exposed as a result of the aggression of the Iraqi regime against it; expressing also their profound regret at the most repugnant forms of suffering to which the Iraqi people is exposed as a result of the indifference of the Iraqi leadership to its interests; and affirming in this connection their support for the Iraqi people in its trial and their undivided concern for the territorial integrity of Arab lands,

Hereby affirm their resolve to endeavour to give a new spirit to joint Arab action and to place fraternal cooperation between the members of the Arab family on firm foundations based on the following:

I. The principles of coordination and cooperation

Coordination and cooperation rest on the following bases:

1. Action in accordance with the Pact of the League of Arab States, the Charter of the United Nations and other Arab and international constituent instruments; respect for and promotion of historic and fraternal links and relations of good-neighbourliness; adherence to respect for territorial integrity, equal sovereignty of States, the non-admissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States; and adherence to the settlement of disputes by peaceful means.

2. An endeavour to build a new Arab system for promoting joint Arab action, taking such arrangements as may be agreed on by the participants as the basis on which it is possible to build in order to achieve that end and leaving the field open to the other Arab States to associate themselves with this Declaration in the light of the agreement of interests and goals.

3. An endeavour to enable the Arab nation to channel all its potentials to meet the challenges to which stability and security in the region are exposed and to achieve a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the question of Palestine on the basis of the Charter and relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

4. The promotion of economic cooperation between the participants as a means towards an economic grouping with the goal of achieving economic and social development.

5. Respect for the principle of the sovereignty of each Arab State over its natural and economic resources.

II. The goals of coordination and cooperation

1. In the political and security fields

(a) The participating parties consider that the current stage following the liberation of Kuwait from occupation by the forces of the Iraqi regime provides the best circumstances for confronting the other challenges and threats to which the region is exposed, first and foremost the challenges arising from the continuation of Israeli occupation of Arab territory and settlement of Jews there. The participating parties believe that the convening of an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations is the most appropriate framework for terminating Israeli occupation of Arab territory and guaranteeing the national rights of the Palestinian people on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

(b) The participants affirm their respect for the principles of the Pact of the League of Arab States, their commitment to the Joint Defence and Economic Cooperation Treaty between the States of the Arab League and their resolve to act together in order to guarantee the security and integrity of the Arab States.

Recalling, in particular, article 9 of the Pact of the League of Arab States, they consider that the presence of Egyptian and Syrian forces in the territory of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and of other Arab States in the Gulf region, in response to the desire expressed by their Governments and for the purpose of defending their territory, represents a nucleus for an Arab peace-keeping force designed to ensure the security and integrity of the Arab States in the Gulf region and a model for ensuring the effectiveness of the overall Arab security and defence system. The participants further affirm that their coordination and cooperation shall not be directed against any other party but may rather constitute a prologue to the opening of a dialogue with those Islamic and international parties which respect the higher interests of the Arab nation and abide by the established principles of international legitimacy, in particular those relating to respect for the sovereignty of States, non-intervention in internal affairs and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

(c) The participants shall endeavour to make of the Middle East region a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and shall strive to achieve that goal through the competent international organs.

2. In the economic and cultural field

In keeping with the Pact of the League of Arab States, the Joint Defence and Economic Cooperation Treaty between the States of the Arab League and the other agreements governing joint Arab action, the participants shall endeavour:

(a) To strengthen the foundations of economic cooperation among the founding parties as a first step which may be built upon, together with other Arab States, with a view to expanding the fields of cooperation and its scope;

(b) To adopt such economic policies as will achieve balanced economic and social development as a preliminary step towards the establishment of an Arab economic community in order to confront existing challenges and to keep pace with developments arising out of the establishment of large-scale economic groupings in the world at large;

(c) To encourage the private sector in the Arab countries to participate in the economic and social development process by, inter alia, promoting contacts among Arab chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture and providing small- and medium-scale establishments with the opportunity to profit from the fruits of joint cooperation in a convenient and tangible manner;

(d) To strengthen the role of scientific research centres and facilitate contacts among them with a view to enabling them to undertake joint studies to achieve integration in all fields;

(e) To make use of human expertise and human resources in the field of cultural and media exchange, subject to account being taken of respect for the values and traditions of participating States and non-interference in their internal affairs.

3. Institutions of joint Arab action

Support for the League of Arab States in resisting all attempts to weaken or dismember it, and reaffirmation of commitment and adherence to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Pact of the League, together with the possible further development of the Pact by the addition thereto of annexes profiting from the results of the work of the Committee on the Amendment of the Pact, including the elaboration of a system for the settlement of disputes.

III. Organizational framework for coordination and cooperation

Coordination and cooperation among the founding parties for the achievement of the objectives indicated shall take place through meetings, to be hosted in rotation by each of the participants, at the level of ministers for foreign affairs and the utilization of experts and specialists to study the various aspects of cooperation with a view to reaching a new contractual modality for inter-Arab cooperation which will be open to all Arab States.

IV. General provisions

This Declaration was initialled at Damascus, in eight original copies in the Arab language, each copy being equally authentic, on 20 Sha'ban A.H. 1411, corresponding to 6 March A.D. 1991. This Declaration shall enter into force following acceptance by the principals, and the instruments indicating acceptance shall be deposited with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Rashid Bin Abdullah Al-Nuaimi
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Mubarak Al-Khalifa
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain

Prince Saud Al-Faisal
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Yousef Bin Al-Alawi Bin Abdulla
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman

Mubarak Ali Al-Khater
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar

Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait

Esmat Abel Meguid
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Farouk Al-Shara'
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic